



ART IN  
PUBLIC PLACES

***Five Year  
Public Art  
Plan***

**2024-2028**



ART IN  
PUBLIC PLACES  
PROGRAM

Aurora - A Moment, A Meaning, A Marvel  
*for the Art in Public Places Division and the 30th anniversary celebration of its collection*  
2023

By Ahja Fox, Aurora Poet Laureate

The artist, the writer, the musician, the people still identified beyond their masks find themselves in a waking dream.

Spiraling muses into a metal star for them, the horizon flits and flutters the beginnings of inspiration.

Through glass stained windows comes the mission of color, the deep mood attitude of gratitude.

We are art in motion banging the drums and tipping the vase into season after any storm!

When birds fly they launch from community's palms into skyscraping pillar, their wings a tangle of evanescent light.

Everything here is a snapped leg chair suspended by incredible magic: statues help elevate the ether, stories origami into lights, and the cosmos blare bright behind a building, furious.

The vehicles of previous years still ghost by— we wave to them, maybe even pray to them, the immortalized journey of the creator before.

Boozy in blue, we (the creators of before) always become Aurora akimbo, kinetic, cartwheeling a wavelength that defies the sky.

Our joy, our trauma is what generates the art in this city; the gemstones of our being came from dinosaurs, horses, and water  
early Aurora versus Aurora now is a tipping scale...

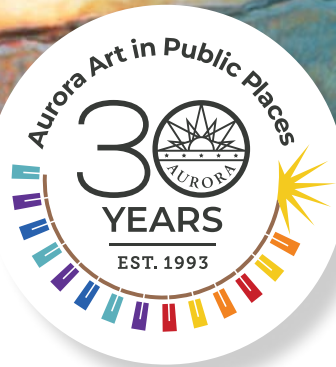
with a woman balancing a beam, a man inching towards it with a mallet, and a person sinking the trumpet towards their chest after blowing too hard.

Art is fight and flight and word and vision. Where nature will abound is where dawn rings. Perceptions manifest in technicolor, move like a delicate fan against the torch dying...

We are art, impossible—a moment, a meaning, a marvel wired alive by its many people.

In background, from top left to bottom right: "Courthouse Panel" by Ayokunle Odeleye, "Dawn Ring" by Carl Reed, "Ascentiate" by Douwe Blumberg, "Gem Stone" by Tom and Jean Latka, "Unglued" by Christopher Weed, "Steel Stampede" by Douwe Blumberg, "Aspire" by David Griggs and Scott Parsons

On the cover, from top left to bottom right:  
“Aspire” by David Griggs and Scott Parsons,  
“Natures Tollgate” by Lisa Cameron Russell,  
“Kou-Prey” by Vanny Chanel, “Once Around”  
by Tim Upham, “Light of Dawn” by Rafe  
Ropek, “Revival” by Yulia Avgustinovich



**“PRAIRIE GRASS SERIES” BY  
CHERYL SAFREN, 2005**



**“NATURE’S TOLLGATE” BY LISA  
CAMERON RUSSELL, 2020**



**“AURORA WRAP”  
BY SUSAN COOPER, 2003**

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# I. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## ART IN PUBLIC PLACES COMMISSION (AS SEPTEMBER, 2023)

- Ana Valles, Chair
- Vanessa Frazier, Vice Chair
- Britanny Pirtle, Former Chair
- Amy Cheslin, Commissioner
- Nick Engen, Former Commissioner
- Karen Jorgensen, Commissioner
- Elaine Lee, Commissioner
- Chelsea Minter-Brindley, Commissioner
- Mary Mollicone, Commissioner
- Margaret Norwood, Commissioner
- Shana Cruz-Thompson, Commissioner

## AURORA ART IN PUBLIC PLACES STAFF

- Roberta Bloom, Cultural Services Manager and Public Art Supervisor
- Amber Pixley, Public Art Specialist

## CONSULTANTS

- Kendall LaMontagne Peterson, ThereSquared LLC
- Jill Stilwell, Stilwell Cultural Consulting LLC

## SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to all the people --Aurora residents, business owner, artists, city staff, and more-- who contributed to this master plan with their opinion via surveys, community meetings or interviews.

"SOLAR WINDS" BY MELANIE WALKER AND GEORGE PETERS, 2010



"UNGLUED" BY CHRISTOPHER WEED, 2007





"ART IN MOTION" BY DAVID OCELOTL GARCIA, 2019

## II. LETTER FROM CHAIR OF AIPP COMMISSION

The Art in Public Places Commission is pleased to present the 2024-2028 Five-Year Public Art Plan to guide the Art In Public Places program goals, initiatives and projects for the next 5 years. This plan represents a re-grouping for the AIPP program after two years of virtual meetings during the global pandemic. Our Commission believes more strongly than ever in the power of public art for Aurora. It can brighten and enliven our public spaces, represent our diverse cultures and backgrounds, and show pride of place for this city we love.

This document reflects the invaluable input and insight from our commissioners, city staff, and consultants along with numerous community representatives to create a diverse and meaningful art experience in Aurora. Thank you to all who have participated in this planning endeavor and to all who appreciate and support the arts in Aurora.

Kindly,  
Ana Valles

### III. ABOUT AURORA

Situated on the plains and hills east of Denver with a majestic view of the Rocky Mountains to the west, Aurora, Colorado is home to more than 386,000 residents, 250+ ethnic eateries, 103 miles of trails, 99 developed parks, 8,000 acres of open space and more than 350 pieces of public art.

#### BIG, AND STILL GROWING

In the last 50 years, Aurora’s population has changed dramatically. The city has grown by 300,000 people and is currently the third largest city in Colorado, the 51st largest city in the country. By 2030, Aurora is expected to grow to almost 450,000 people. (Auroragov.org, “Who is Aurora” Report, 2022.)

#### YOUNG AT HEART

Compared to the Metro Area and the State, Aurora is a relatively young community, with a high percentage of the population being under the age of 45. The 0-24- and 25–44-year-old age groups make up approximately 247,000 residents, or 65% of the city’s total population.

#### PROUDLY DIVERSE

Aurora is among the most diverse cities in Colorado. This can be seen in everything from the global choices in local restaurants and our international connections through the arts, culture and events that celebrate the city’s diversity. Aurora is more racially diverse than it has ever been. The charts below show how our racial composition has changed over time. Currently, 29% of residents identify as Hispanic or Latino, and that number has gone up over the past five years; 17% of Aurorans identify as black and 7% identify as Asian.

**Anecdote:** When interviewing stakeholders for the Five-Year Public Art plan, when asked “What makes Aurora unique?” nearly every person’s first response was proudly: “Our Diversity.” It is a point of pride for Aurorans. Aurora is evolving.

*In a 2023 Aurora Public Art Survey, an overwhelming majority—over 93%-- of residents affirmed that “public art adds value to their community.”*

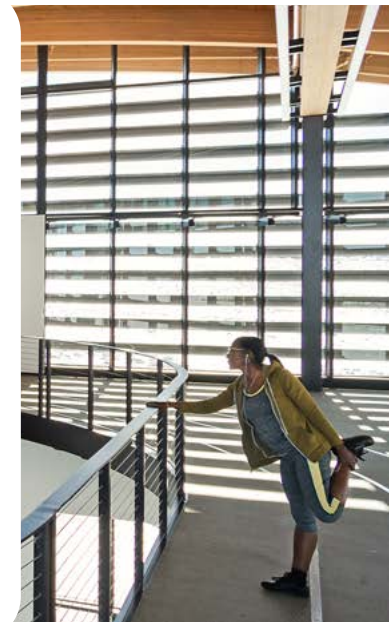
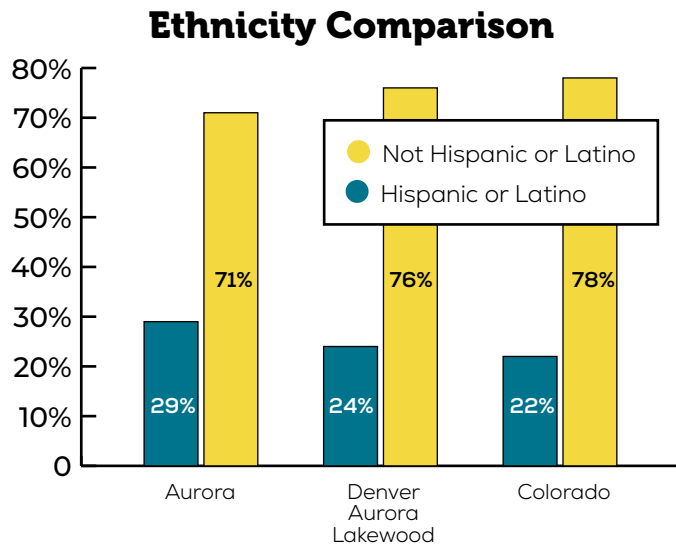
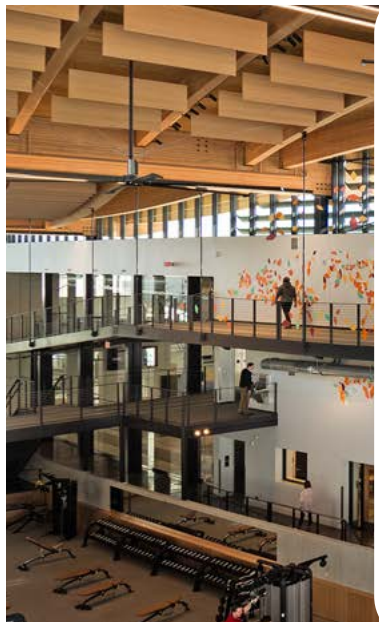
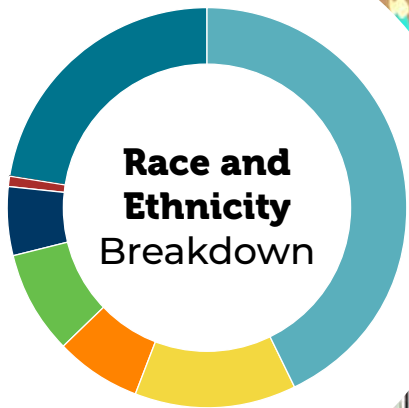
*When asked to articulate how public art adds value, the top responses were that public art:*

- “...provides artwork that the whole community can enjoy and interact with for free.”*
- “...creates a sense of place and helps make our public spaces more memorable.”*
- “...contributes to our community pride and our sense of belonging.”*
- “...provokes thought and can create positive changes in our society.”*





- White 56%
- Black 17%
- Some other race 9%
- Asian 7%
- American Indian/Alaskan Native 1%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander .03 %
- Hispanic/Latino (any race) 29%



**22% of Residents are foreign-born**

Our largest foreign-born populations come from **Latin America (51%)** and **Asia (24%)**

**Approximately 34% of residents speak a language other than English at home**

Spanish, Asian and Pacific Islander languages are most common

Overall, more than **100 languages** are spoken in Aurora.



"CANOPY AT FLETCHER PLAZA" BY JESSICA SAUTHER, 2001

## IV. WHY PUBLIC ART?

Since 1993, Aurora has been committed to offering art experiences in public places for the community. Public art enhances our public spaces, anchors our local gathering places and commercial centers and offers memorable one-of-a-kind experiences within the public realm. Public art is accessible to everyone in the community, enhances the quality of life for all citizens, increases access to art experiences and educates citizens on a variety of topics from history to modern social issues.

Americans for the Arts reports that public art can be a powerful economic tool, attracting new businesses to the city, drawing and engaging a new workforce and inspiring creativity, leading to innovation (Americans for the Arts, "Why Public Art Matters," 2018).

Public art has been identified as one of the elements that make a city or town a desirable place to live, visit and locate and grow a business. Public Art is one tool to assist in "placemaking," which aims to develop humanistic and memorable landscapes and spaces, places for human activity that improve our sense of well-being and overall happiness. Placemaking is a key strategy for well-planned growth and development. Nearly half of people with college degrees and a majority of Millennials say they would strongly consider whether a community is "rich in the arts" when deciding where to locate for a job ("Americans Speak Out Art, 2016, Americans for the Arts).

Public art is generally publicly funded, selected by members of the community and is available for the public to experience at no cost. Public art can take many visual forms, from abstract to representational, functional to ephemeral. Through access to art in public places, all people have the opportunity to experience different layers of meaning, enjoy the vibrancy of enhanced spaces and witness the collective history of our community. Public Art is an essential component of a thriving city.



# V. PUBLIC ART IN AURORA

## ART IN PUBLIC PLACES ORDINANCE

Since Aurora’s City Council adopted an ordinance to acquire and maintain public art and administer a program in 1993, Aurora’s Art in Public Places (AIPP) Program has installed over 300 individual works of public art throughout all six wards. These community assets raise the quality of life and enhance Aurora’s public spaces as the city grows and evolves.

One of the strengths of Aurora’s art collection is the wide variety of art themes, media, scales of artwork and locations throughout the city. Increasingly, murals, integrated artwork and temporary projects have added more diversity to the Aurora collection. Aurora’s collection currently contains abstract and representational sculptures, small, intimate drawings, large wall-sized murals, functional artwork and playground artwork for children with disabilities, fiber tapestries and two-dimensional works.

## FUNDING AND GOVERNANCE

In Aurora, public art is funded through an ordinance (City Code section 34-128 ) requiring one percent of the funds from construction projects with budgets over \$100,000 to be dedicated to public art. Included construction projects are new construction, rehabilitation, remodeling, equipping or improvement of any public building, street, park or other public improvement by or for the city, within city limits, including all associated landscaping, parking areas and similar areas or facilities. The ordinance excludes utilities projects and other improvements as exempted by the City Council. Seventy-five percent of the dedicated public art funds are used for Acquisition, and the remaining twenty-five percent is kept for Administration and Maintenance of the collection. Grants, developer requirements and other fundraising efforts also finance city public art projects.

The Art in Public Places Program is governed by a nine-member Aurora City Council-appointed Art in Public Places Commission (AIPPC). The commission is responsible for making recommendations to the Aurora City Council regarding the public art program, including project budget allocation, strategic planning, development of policies and procedures and approval of artwork to be commissioned or purchased. Every five years, the AIPPC conducts a long-range planning process resulting in a Five-Year Public Art Plan. For more information about how artwork is selected, funded and maintained, please visit [AuroraGov.org/PublicArt](http://AuroraGov.org/PublicArt).

### AIPP COMMISSIONERS AND ARTISTS AT THE 2022 CHALK LINES AND VINES AND 7/20 MEMORIAL ANNUAL EVENT.

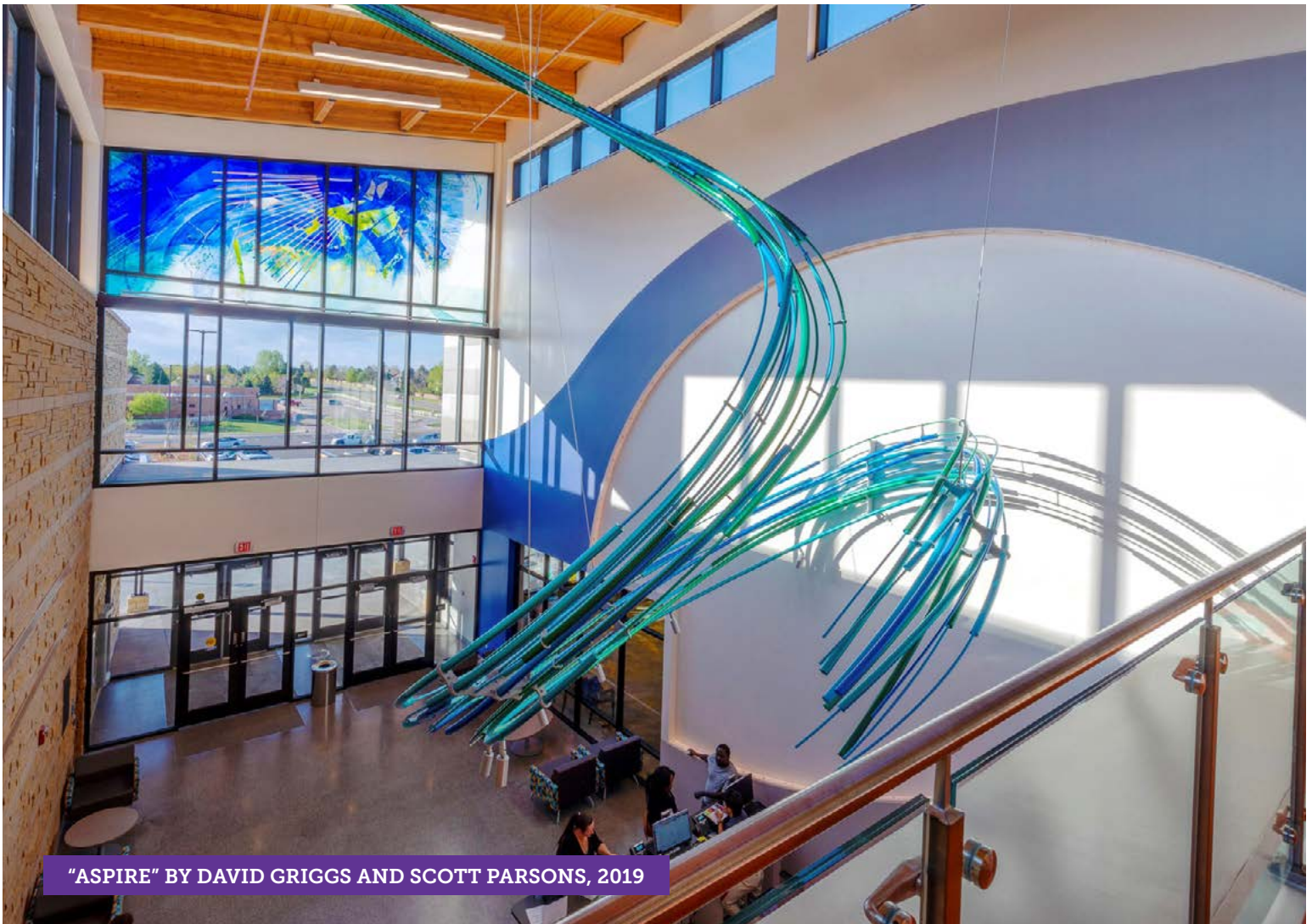


## VI. PURPOSE OF THE FIVE-YEAR PUBLIC ART PLAN

Every five years, the Art In Public Places Commission (AIPPC) begins a planning process to assess the goals and accomplishments in their last Five-Year Plan and develops a new program plan for the upcoming five years. The new Five-Year Plan identifies goals and objectives for the AIPP program for implementation between 2024-2028.

This plan is also a public-facing document that will serve as a communication and marketing tool to help the public better understand the Aurora Public Art Program, how it works, why it is important and details of its goals and strategies for the future.

**How to use this plan:** This Five-Year Plan is intended to guide the program for the next five-year period. However, it is intended as a living, working document and should be revisited yearly and revised as needed. As the years of the recent global pandemic taught us, departmental priorities will evolve and change over time—sometimes opportunities can arise unexpectedly. The AIPP Commission and staff will continue to track all of these changes and opportunities and adjust the plan priorities as needed. The changes will be reflected in the yearly reports and work plans for the program.



"ASPIRE" BY DAVID GRIGGS AND SCOTT PARSONS, 2019

## VII. PUBLIC INPUT AND RESEARCH METHODS

**Public Input:** Over two dozen individuals participated directly with this plan in the form of interviews and focus groups for this project, including key city staff, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office, City Council members, local and regional artists, as well as representatives from Visit Aurora, Aurora Chamber and the On Havana Street Business Improvement District (BID). The AIPP Commission and staff actively participated in five facilitated work sessions, online surveys and reviewed and provided feedback on each element of the plan.

**Survey:** As part of the Five-Year Art in Public Places Plan (2024-2028), a survey was conducted to engage the community in the process and discover more about their interest, expectations and appreciation for the Aurora Art in Public Places Program. The community survey was distributed via EngageAurora.com at several events and festivals, “at-large” meetings and libraries. The survey was available in Spanish and English and was open to the public for a total of six weeks, from April to June 16, 2023. The total survey responses were just over 400, with six in Spanish.

The survey began with a broad question about what people think makes Aurora “Unique and Different” from other communities in the region. The top answers were its diversity (63%), Aurora’s parks and open spaces (53%) and its proximity to the airport, transit and highways (44%). Aurora’s “Arts and Culture Opportunities” came in fifth, with 30% of people stating that it is something that makes Aurora unique and different from other communities, right after its affordability.

88% of the respondents have “viewed/noticed/enjoyed public art,” and when asked where, the top answers tended to be in pedestrian-friendly areas such as parks, light rail stations, municipal buildings and libraries.

When asked to articulate their reasons for this response, the top responses were that public art:

- “...provides artwork that the whole community can enjoy and interact with for free.”
- “...creates a sense of place and helps make our public spaces more memorable.”
- “...contributes to our community pride and our sense of belonging.”
- “...provokes thought and can create positive changes in our society.”

The full analysis of the survey is included in the Appendix.

**Policies Review and Updates:** The consulting team researched and analyzed the current AIPP policies and procedures to identify updates or revisions to reflect best and current practices. The recommended policy and procedures are included in the Appendix. Highlights of the revisions include:

- Corrected language around AIPPC appointments to align with current City Code
- Updating conflict of interest policy
- Streamlining site selection process to reflect current practices
- Updating site selection criteria
- Updating Equal Opportunity language
- Moving requests for memorials or monuments to be handled in accordance with the Department of Parks and Recreation “Policy on Memorials on City Property.”

**Potential Location Identification:** The consulting team identified potential art locations by reviewing the city’s upcoming Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), interviews and focus groups, on-the-ground research, analysis of the AIPP Strategic Plan and AIPP staff and commission. The AIPP Commission and staff were engaged in reviewing and prioritizing the consolidated list of locations against revised key criteria. The Prioritized Locations List is below, and the revised location criteria can be found in the Appendix.

A huge majority—95%-- of the respondents stated that it is “very important” or “somewhat important” for their families to experience the arts, with 73% stating it is “very important.”

Finally, an overwhelming majority—over 93%-- of survey respondents affirmed that “public art adds value to their community.”



**"CLINTON STREET MURAL"  
BY YULIA AVGUSTINOVICH, 2016**



**"MOUNTAINS" BY  
GORDON HUETHER, 2021**



**"DAWN RING" BY CARL REED, 1982**

## **VIII. GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM 2019-2023 FIVE-YEAR PLAN**

Over the prior Plan period (2019-2023), the AIPP Commission and staff accomplished many of their objectives as outlined in the Plan, despite the COVID pandemic's impact on our daily lives and work from March 2020 through most of 2022. Here are a few of those accomplishments:

### **GOAL 1: DIVERSITY**

"Facilitate art that reflects the city's diversity in culture, history, beliefs, heritage, race, age, ethnicity and gender."

- The Library and Cultural Services Department commissioned an installation by artist David Ocelotl Garcia at Aurora's Central Library, with the artwork becoming part of the public art collection.
- The Commission implemented the Art in Public Places Diversity Statement and met with Aurora's Diversity Manager, Angel McKinley-Paige, to better align with the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Office's goals.
- The art selection process now includes voluntary diversity identification requests from applicants.
- Art 2C on Havana Street 2022-24, 33.33% of artists were new to the program.
- The 3 Pedestals Project is specifically designed to provide access and opportunity for new artists in the Aurora Cultural Arts District (ACAD) (in progress).
- AIPP commissioned a poem from Aurora's new Poet Laureate, Ahja Fox for its 30th Anniversary (featured at the beginning of this plan).

### **GOAL 2: EDUCATION**

"Continue to educate residents, visitors and stakeholders to increase understanding within the community about public art in Aurora through outreach, social media and events."

- The AIPPC promoted the program at annual city events, including Colfax Canvas, Boos Cruise, Chalk Lines and Vines, 7/20 Memorial Foundation, ACAD Art Jams and Global Fest.
- In 2023, AIPP will celebrate its 30th Anniversary with special publications, events and Ahja Fox's poem.
- To begin building a relationship with schools in Aurora, AIPP offered the Charles Burrell Academy a tour of our public art and an educational resource guide.
- The AIPPC regularly updates and produces content for AIPP social media.
- An FAQ about the AIPP program was created and posted online and will be included in the AIPP 30th Annual Catalog and exhibit.
- Aurora Creates and the Aurora water bill are regular publications in which the AIPP program is featured and highlighted.

### GOAL 3: ADVOCACY

“Advocate for public art in the city of Aurora through outreach efforts, staff, city budgeting and other local and state art groups.”

- The AIPP Commission and staff liaised with other organizations, including the 7/20 Memorial Foundation, On Havana Street Business Improvement District (BID), Aurora Chamber Arts + Business Connections Committee, Business Arts Community Alliance and the Aurora Cultural Arts District.
- Aurora Creates and the Aurora water bill are regular publications in which the AIPP program is featured and highlighted.
- The AIPPC and Staff regularly communicated with elected officials and advocated for the program through the budget process.

### GOAL 4: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

“Engage and connect the public to public art in Aurora through interacting with the pieces, participation in the art selection process and plan updates, education and outreach efforts.”

- Art 2C on Havana Street, 2022-24, displays 12 temporary artworks along this busy thoroughfare and a printed and online guide is published to celebrate it.
- AIPP presented exhibitions at the Martin Luther King Jr. and Tallyn’s Reach libraries and the Mezzanine Gallery at the Aurora Municipal Center.
- Art in Public Places partnered with Aurora Sister Cities to create a mini resource fair for the 2022 Global Youth Leaders program. AIPP created an interactive scavenger hunt to introduce and educate students about our program.
- AIPP and Havana BID staff evaluated the Art 2 C on Havana Street program for improvements.
- The Charles Burrell Academy Public Art Tour is available to the public online.
- The AIPPC reviewed and updated the AIPP mission statement.

“KOU-PREY” BY VANNY CHANAL



“BLOOM”  
BY KASIA POLKOWSKA



“HELIX HARMONY”  
BY SEAN YARBROUGH





"COALESCENCE" BY BIMMER TORRES (BIMMER T.), 2017

## GOAL 5: MAINTENANCE

"Review and continually update a maintenance plan for the entire collection."

- AIPPC reviewed and updated the maintenance plan.
- 17 works were maintained through cleaning, repair or major restoration
- Data was transferred into a new asset management system.

## GOAL 6: INNOVATION

"Encourage and foster art that is innovative, creates a sense of place, sparks conversation and community, and captures Aurora's diversity."

- The installation of "Florescence" at the Southeast Recreation Center (2023) is an example of AIPP collaborating with other city departments (in this case, Parks and Recreation) and architects to create quality places within the city.
- Milender White, the developer of Parkside at City Center, received the Aurora Chamber's Art + Business Committee Award for their integration of Public Art into the Transit Oriented Development District.
- "Dawn Fountain" by Rafe Ropek was converted to "Light of Dawn" in support of water conservation efforts.
- By deaccessioning a failing artwork, "On the Move 1," AIPP improved the collection by inviting the artist Gordon Huether to create a new work titled "Mountains."
- AIPP staff developed an educational event for teachers and staff of the Charles Burrell Visual and Performing Arts Academy that included a special educational resource guide developed in cooperation with Aurora Public Library Staff and a walking of tour of public art in the arts district that identified curriculum content ties for each artwork.

## IX. AURORA ART IN PUBLIC PLACES FIVE-YEAR PLAN (2024-2028)

Built upon the accomplishments of the previous Five-Year Plan, the AIPP Strategic Plan, public input, research, outside expertise, and the commitment, dedication and experience of the AIPP staff and Commission, the following represents the updated Five-Year Plan (2024-2028) for the Aurora Art in Public Places program.

### ART IN PUBLIC PLACES PROGRAM MISSION AND VISION

**Mission:** The mission of the Art in Public Places Program (AIPP) is to capture the pulse of the community by contributing to neighborhood development and economic vitality and by engaging the many voices of Aurora through art and culture.

**Vision:** The City of Aurora Art in Public Places envisions establishing a unique identity for the City of Aurora while contributing to the civic pride of the community and creating a sense of place. The variety of media and styles reinforces and expands Aurora's commitment to improving the aesthetic character of its public places. Public Art in Aurora encourages interaction and meaningful connections among diverse communities while educating people about the value of the arts in their community.

### 2024-2028 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

#### GOAL 1: BUILD AWARENESS AROUND THE PUBLIC ART PLAN AND AUGMENT THE BRAND OF AIPP PROGRAM.

The Art in Public Places program is very popular in Aurora, as seen from the survey results. However, more can be done to promote the program's work and collection and to educate the public about what public art is, how it is selected and how it benefits the community. All of this will foster increased understanding and trust for AIPP programs.

*An overwhelming majority—over 93%—of survey respondents affirmed that “public art adds value to their community.”  
– AIPP Survey June 2023*

#### Objectives:

- Develop new or expanded outreach tools (tours, QR codes, social media, school activities, teachers' guides, walking tours with downloadable maps, etc.). Develop a plan for city staff to continue the social media work that the AIPPC began.
- Stay vigilant in keeping city staff and elected officials up to speed on AIPP requirements, especially after staff changes and elections. This could include:
  - Develop a “Public Art 101” introduction (video/live or both) for new City staff/officials and new AIPP Commissioners.
  - Continued quarterly meetings with Parks, Public Works, Planning and other key departments.
- Augment the AIPP brand through consistent messaging on the purpose and benefits of public art to the public, elected officials, stakeholders, etc.
  - Develop a white paper with speaking points about the purpose and benefits of AIPP in Aurora.
  - Implement annual internal AIPP Training for project managers and staff from key departments such as Planning, Development, Public Works and Parks, Recreation and Open Space.
- Take advantage of partnerships to add public art to existing promotions (Visit Aurora, Economic Development, City, BID, etc.).
- Develop a small “Volunteer Team” or hourly contractors to help with outreach, walking tours, etc.
- Better define the role of the AIPPC in promotion, advocacy and awareness. Continue monthly outreach to City Council members and key staff.

*When asked what makes Aurora "Unique and Different" from other communities in the region, survey respondents' top answer was its diversity (63%)*

## **GOAL 2: EMBRACE AND ENCOURAGE DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN ALL ASPECTS OF AURORA'S PUBLIC ART PROGRAM AND COLLECTION.**

Aurora is growing more diverse every day, and this fact is a source of great pride for Aurorans. The AIPP program, selection process and collection should reflect this diversity and express all facets of diversity and inclusion.

### **Objectives:**

- Update the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) framework for AIPP Program.
- Partner with the city's DEI office to assist in reaching and engaging diverse artists and community members in AIPP.
- Seek diverse representation on the AIPP Commission and selection panels.
- Encourage artwork that reflects all types of diversity in Aurora.
- Engage artists at all career levels and nurture emerging artists in particular.
  - Develop mentorship or training opportunities for emerging artists and other potential AIPP talent (e.g., Art 2C on Havana Street or the 3 Pedestal Project).
  - Be inclusive of diverse community members in public art - creation, participation and volunteerism.
- Diversify new art acquisitions in terms of materials, scale, siting, two-dimensional, etc.
- Enhance the Art 2C on Havana Street program with new artists, scale, media and visibility.
- Consider how best to utilize the AMC gallery space in potential collaboration with the city's DEI Office that is housed there.
- Be inclusive of diverse community members in public art - creation, participation and volunteerism.

*The most cited reasons why public art adds value to Aurora included creating a sense of place, and it is something the whole community can enjoy and interact with for free.*

## **GOAL 3: PRIORITIZE PUBLIC ART PROJECTS THAT ALIGN WITH CITY INITIATIVES AND PLACEMAKING EFFORTS**

Aurora is growing and changing. As new communities are springing up along the northeastern and southeastern sections of the city, older, centralized neighborhoods are undergoing redevelopment and updates. All these new city spaces will have areas for the public and potential sites for public art. The AIPP program can help these areas to be more memorable, humanistic and beautiful through public art.

### **Objectives:**

- Revisit the Location Prioritization List annually to consider new and evolving information.
- Begin identifying new integrated projects earlier in their genesis.
- Align projects with City Planning and city building happening in next the five years.
- Strive for artistic excellence and diversity in every project.
- Balance new city building projects with "art deserts" in the city.
- Re-set expectations about spreading public art throughout the Wards to allow greater flexibility in project timing.
- Ensure the AIPP program can be nimble/flexible enough to respond to unforeseen opportunities/projects.





"GHOST TROLLEY" BY LAWRENCE ARGENT, 2007



"ASPIRE" BY DAVID GRIGGS AND SCOTT PARSONS, 2019

## GOAL 4: BE EXCELLENT STEWARDS OF THE PUBLIC ART COLLECTION

As the public art collection grows and ages, so do its maintenance needs. The cleaning, repair, and ongoing maintenance of the public art collection in Aurora has been increasing steadily over the last several years and will continue to grow. This will require planning, funding and staff time.

### Objectives:

- Manage the public art collections through regular inventories and condition reporting.
- Engage consultants to assist with the inventories, condition reports and maintenance of the collection.
- Assess maintenance funding each year and advocate for additional funding as needed; advocate as needed for additional staffing as well.
- Consider how best to continue the existing library gallery program due to space re-configuration and changes in priorities.
- Track potential new multi-use City event facility and advocate for it to include proper exhibition space and public art installations.

## GOAL 5: STREAMLINE AIPP POLICIES AND PROCESSES

From collection maintenance procedures to funding thresholds, the Public Art Program requires a great deal of staff time and resources. Streamlining activities and procedures and managing can help with this, leaving more time for project management and other activities.

### Objectives:

- Finalize formal agreement with On Havana Street BID for Art 2C on Havana Street program.
- Advocate streamlining selection, approval and contracting processes so artists can get to work sooner and staff time is reduced. This includes:
  - Advocacy for raising current contract approval thresholds.
  - Continued efforts in augmented artist selection methods (invitationals, interviews) while keeping high levels of community input intact.
- Consider working with consultants to serve as project managers for certain AIPP projects.
- Improvements to "AMANDA" developer software.
- Streamline the private developer program and consider hiring a consultant or part-time employee to assist with program coordination.
- Set expectations within given resources.

## STAFF CAPACITY: ONGOING CHALLENGE

Current staffing assigned to manage the public art program includes one full-time supervisor and one Variable Hour Benefitted Employee (VHBE). The demands on staff time are anticipated to increase significantly.

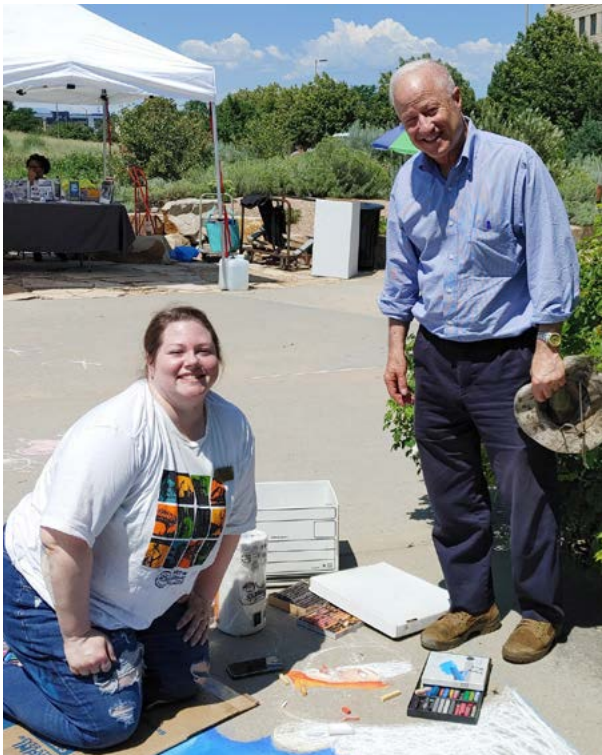
- As the Public Art program and collection grows, so will the need for increased maintenance of artwork.
- As Aurora continues to grow, so will development, increasing the need for greater coordination with developers on their art plans.
- As the City embarks on capital projects, including the Civic Center area development, coordination with City departments for 1% of projects will increase.
- As art in the community gains momentum, more businesses, neighborhoods and community organizations will seek assistance from city staff to develop their own art projects.

The impact of the public art program in Aurora is enormous and growing and will require increased staff resources to successfully address each of these areas as it grows.

## ROLE OF THE AIPP COMMISSION:

The Art in Public Places Commission is an active and participatory group that regularly engages in the art and site selection processes and managing policy but also conducts community outreach and advocacy to bolster the program. The Commission describes its role as follows:

- Acting as an effective communication channel among the community, staff and City Council
- Regularly communicating with elected officials, including through Ward meetings
- Participating in art selection panels
- Representing the AIPP program and supporting other city organizations at public events
- Serving as liaisons between the AIPP Commission and other cultural entities in Aurora
- Making recommendations regarding maintenance priorities for the city's public art collection
- Prioritizing site selections and providing budgetary recommendations for projects.
- Annually advocate for the program through the budget process.





**"UNGLUED" BY CHRISTOPHER WEED, 2007**



**"LIGHT OF DAWN" BY RAFE ROPEK, 2021**

## **X. PRIORITIZED LOCATIONS FOR ART**

One of the main tasks in developing a Five-Year Public Art Plan is to select sites throughout Aurora for artwork. Selecting a site for art is as important as the selection of the art itself. An appropriate site selection ensures that the artist can create a quality design and that their work will be easily accessible and secure. In selecting a site for artwork, assessments are taken of site suitability, existing or planned, including accessibility, visibility, public safety and the function of a site as well as forwarding the AIPP's mission and goals. The selection criteria were reviewed and updated as part of this planning process. The revised criteria can be found in the Appendix.

The consultants pulled together a comprehensive list of potential locations for public art and then facilitated a review and prioritization process with the AIPP Commission and staff. The following chart prioritizes sites for the next five years. That said, this Plan is a living document and will be revisited year to year by the AIPP Commission and staff to identify new or changing opportunities.

### **PRIORITIZED PROJECT LIST, 2024-2028**

#### **2024 ONGOING PROJECTS FUNDED AND BEGUN IN 2023**

##### **Veterans Housing at Liberty View**

49,500 · Ward I · David Farquarson, artist; installation expected before Veterans Day.

##### **Peoria Crossing**

Ward I · Sculpture relocation 2023-2024

##### **Justice Center Projects:** 2nd Floor mural and Jury Room 2D art.

\$20k · Ward III · Selection panel will be formed soon.

#### **2024 PRIORITY PROJECTS**

##### **ART 2C on Havana Street 2024**

\$15,499 every 2 years · Ward I, III

##### **Metro Center/TOD**

\$75k allotted · Ward III · Sculptures near pond area

##### **ACAD sculpture bases;** 3 Pedestal Project; designated as a DEI/Emerging artists project)

\$50k per pedestal (\$150k) · Ward I · Re-start projects; 3 sculptures/3 artists will be selected

##### **9 Mile Ped Bridge** (on hold from 2023)

\$100k (to date?) · Ward IV · Vicki Scuri is the selected artist; research new projects in 9 Mile area or elsewhere

##### **Bus Rapid Transit on Colfax:** work with City of Denver

unfunded · Ward I · Possible gateway project

##### **Aurora Water:** potential projects at multiple locations

Anticipate funding through relationship with Aurora Water · multiple · Multi-year project from 2024-2028

##### **Central Rec Center:** Outdoor park and plaza area sculpture; Parks/Rec

150k · Ward V

## 2025 PRIORITY PROJECTS

**Plains Conservation Center:** in partnership with Denver Botanic Gardens.  
unfunded · Ward II

**13th Avenue AURA:** (Bridge & Sculpture) TOD around the 13th Ave Station;  
\$200k, \$150k · Ward I

### Central Library Renovations

unfunded · Ward III

### New Animal Shelter satellite facility (CIP)

unfunded · Ward VI

## 2026 AND BEYOND

### ART 2C on Havana Street 2026 & 2028

\$15,499 every 2 years · Ward I, III

**Highline Canal:** Two sites at trailheads on Colfax and 13th/14th, (already works of art in the area)

\$80K each site · Ward II, III · Possible shade structures

**Alameda and 225 Bridge CDOT:** Bridge is being widened

unfunded · Ward III · Integrated?

### CIP Roads (City Priority Areas)

- **Havan Construction:** Multimodal improvements and private Development) Ward 1, III?
- **Quincy,** Gun Club to Powhaton Ward IV
- **Gun Club** Widening multimodal Quincy to Aurora Parkway Ward VI?
- **Montview** multimodal improvements; Integrate with newer more walkable neighborhoods  
unfunded · Multiple

### Other Roads for Consideration:

- **6th Avenue**
- **Chambers Corridor:** commuter arterial  
unfunded · Multiple

**Cultural Center/Multi Use Facility** for AMC

unfunded · Unknown, probably III · Keep watching for this

**Gateways;** main arteries into city (Colfax, 6th & Havana, Central Park and Yosemite, Dayton and Parker Road; Airport area 64th/E470)

unfunded · Multiple

### Public Safety

- **Station 8 Replacement Ward III**
- **Station 4 Replacement (Ward IV)**

unfunded · Wards III, VI

### Aurora Reservoir Improvements (CIP)

unfunded · Ward IV

**Signature Park CIP:** Phase I, at Alameda and Airport

unfunded · Ward II

### Utah Pool/Rec Center additions (CIP)

unfunded · Ward IV

**North East Library** (New, Ward II)

unfunded · Ward II

### Peoria Bridge over Sand Creek (CIP)

unfunded · Ward I



"FIRST RESPONSE"  
BY JOHN KING, 2019



"ONE NATION" BY DAVID OCELOTL GARCIA, 2021

# APPENDIX

## UPDATED SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

### 1. Is this project something that will support the AIPP Mission Statement?

### 2. Is this project in an area of growth/ importance for the City of Aurora?

Is it on the CIP list? Is the project in an area of growth/development? Is the area set for multimodal development (ped/bike/transit access) Is the area part of re-development or Urban Renewal?

### 3. Could this project help support our Diversity Goals?\*

(\*Identify diversity goals at every master plan period.) Does this project contribute to neighborhood identity, activity, history, pride, etc.? Is this project Neighborhood-serving vs. Regional-scale? Does the project contribute to a collection that demonstrates a diversity in scale, artists, materials, emerging artists, themes, etc.

### 4. Will this project support economic development goals?

(i.e.. reduce blight; help attract business through beautification; improve quality of life; show pride and investment in the community or help fill an art desert or is in an underserved neighborhood)

### 5. Will this project create a sense of place? Does it serve placemaking goals?

Does it identify a unique area or neighborhood; mark a special location or entry; create a new sense of place; create a new experience of a place.

### 6. Visibility

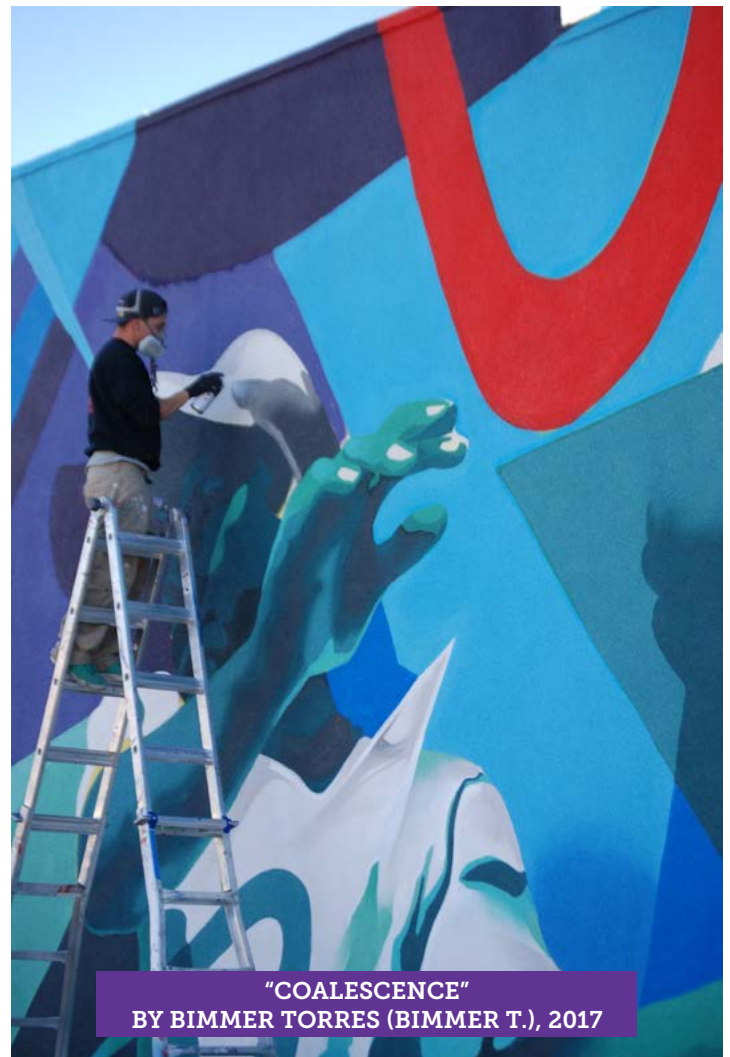
Is it easy to find? How many people will experience the art?

### 7. Accessibility

Universal access (ADA)? Will it be well-identified?

### 8. Are there safety concerns?

Are you concerned about vandalism, threat of damage from vehicles, traffic sightlines, snowplows, etc.





**"STORIES INTERWEAVE" BY JOE O'CONNELL/CREATIVE MACHINES, 2017**

**"ONCE AROUND" BY TIM UPHAM, 2021**

### **OPTIONAL: TIMING**

When is this project likely to happen? Is it scheduled within the City's project timeline?

- For 1 year, assign a score of 5
- For 2 years out, assign a score of 4
- For 3, assign a score of 3
- For 4, assign a score of 2
- For 5, assign a score of 1
- Beyond 5, assign a score of 0

### **OPTIONAL: STAFF CAPACITY**

Does this rank high enough to allocate limited staff resources? If not, are there enough resources to augment staff capacity (i.e., contracting)?

### **AURORA ART IN PUBLIC PLACES SURVEY SUMMARY**

As part of the Five-Year Art in Public Places Plan (2024-2028), a survey was created to engage the community in the process and discover more about their interest, expectations and appreciation for the Aurora Art in Public Places Program. The survey to the community was distributed via EngageAurora.com and at libraries. The survey was available in Spanish and English and was open to the public for a total of 6 weeks, from April 28 to June 16, 2023. The total number of survey responses was just over 400, with six in Spanish.

The survey began with a broad question about what people think makes Aurora "Unique and Different" from other communities in the region. The top answers were its diversity (63%), Aurora's parks and open spaces (53%) and its proximity to the airport, transit and highways (44%). Aurora's "Arts and Culture Opportunities" came in fifth, with 30% of people stating that it is something that makes Aurora unique and different from other communities, right after its affordability. When people were asked where they take visitors who come to Aurora, the top destination was the Stanley Marketplace area, followed by community festivals and events. The Aurora Fox/Colfax Arts District was in the top five destinations for visitors, followed closely by "cultural amenities" (i.e., museums and galleries).

A huge majority—95%—of the respondents stated that it is "very important" or "somewhat important" for their families to experience the arts, with 73% stating it is "very important."

88% of the respondents have "viewed/noticed/enjoyed public art," and when asked where, the top answers tended to be in pedestrian-friendly areas such as parks, light rail stations, inside municipal buildings and libraries.

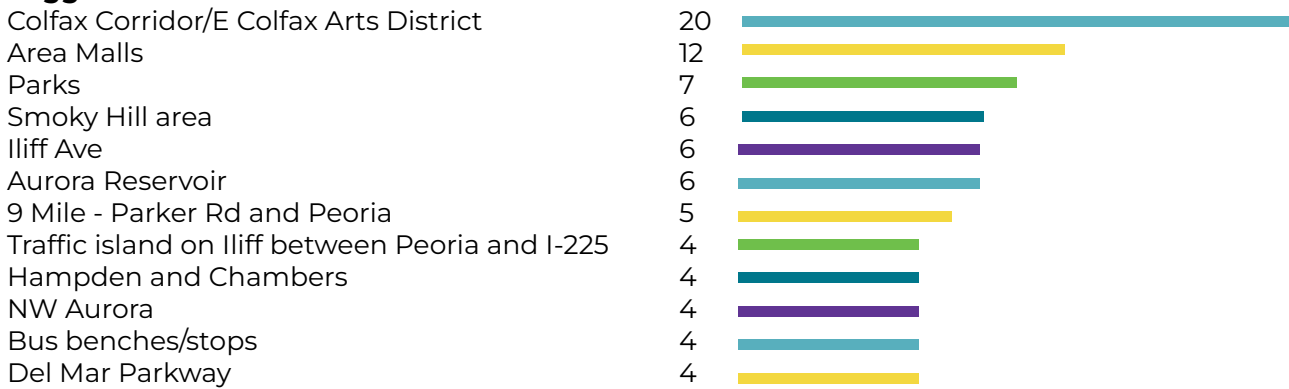
Finally, an overwhelming majority—over 93%-- of survey respondents affirmed that “public art adds value to their community.” When asked to articulate their reasons for this response, the top responses were that public art:

- “...provides artwork that the whole community can enjoy and interact with for free.”
- “...creates a sense of place and helps make our public spaces more memorable.”
- “...contributes to our community pride and our sense of belonging.”
- “...provokes thought and can create positive changes in our society.”

Of the few people who did not think public art adds value to the community, their reasons included that the funds spent on artwork might be spent on other issues (homelessness, blight reduction, addiction, etc., or they didn’t think the art was good or to their taste.

The final question asked the community where they would like to see more artwork. There were hundreds of responses to sift through, but from a cursory analysis, the majority of the write-in responses would like to direct artwork to the Colfax corridor, pedestrian-friendly places like the large malls in Aurora and in Parks. There were also some respondents calling for artwork along other arterials like Hampden, Parker Road, Iliff and Chambers. Below is a summary of some of those locations:

**Suggested Locations for New Art**



*Thank you to all the people who participated and contributed to the development of this Five-Year Public Art Plan and to City Council and city leadership for understanding the value of public art in this community and creating an environment where creativity thrives.*

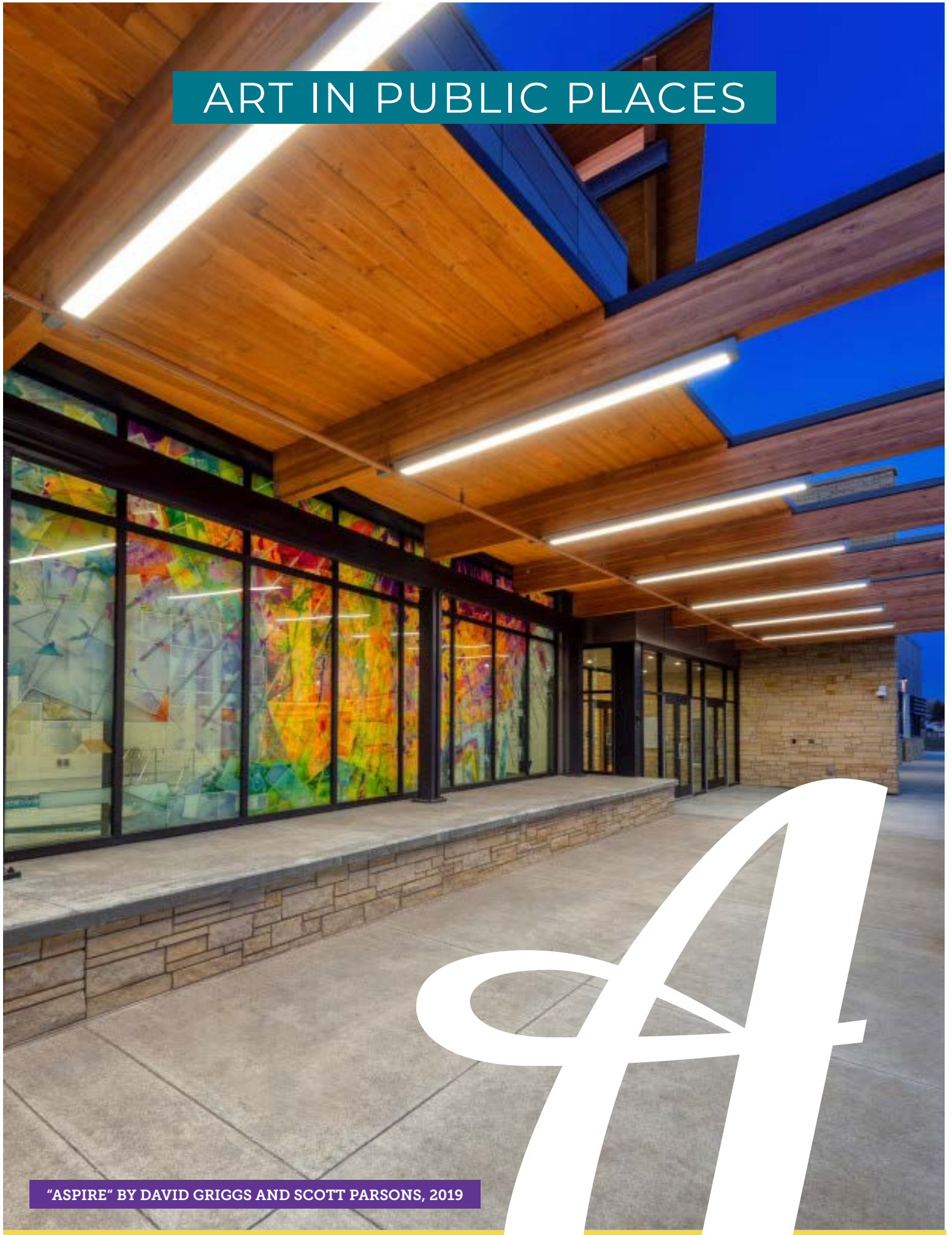
**“NEVER FORGETTING OUR HEROES”  
BY AUSTIN WEISHEL, 2020**



**“REVIVAL” BY YULIA AVGUSTINOVICH, 2019**



# ART IN PUBLIC PLACES



"ASPIRE" BY DAVID GRIGGS AND SCOTT PARSONS, 2019